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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR WILLIAM SWING VISITS PERU IN SUPPORT OF
IOM CANDIDACY

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Ambassador William Swing was in Peru April 2-3 seeking support for his candidacy for the position of Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Ambassador Swing had a cordial and productive meeting with Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Gonzalo Gutierrez and later toured the regional IOM office in Lima. Though no promises were made, we believe Peru is likely to favor Ambassador Swing's candidacy. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Ambassador William Swing visited Peru April 2-3 as part of his two-week tour of South America seeking support in his campaign for the position of Director General (DG) of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Ambassador Swing had a cordial and productive meeting with Vice Minister (VM) of Foreign Affairs Gonzalo Gutierrez. Peruvian Under Secretary for Peruvians Abroad William Belevan attended. PRM

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Program Officer Monique Ramgoolie and poloff also participated.

Deputy FM on Peru's Migration Challenges

¶3. (SBU) VM Gutierrez opened the meeting by remarking on Peru's close working relationship with the IOM. Gutierrez noted the importance of migration issues to Peru, given that an estimated one tenth of its population lived overseas, primarily in the U.S. (where over one million Peruvians reside, he said), Italy, Spain, Argentina, and Chile. He noted an initiative in Peru's Congress to create a special voting "district" for Peruvians overseas, akin to similar arrangements in Italy and France.

¶4. (SBU) VM Gutierrez offered that he would like to see the next IOM DG pay special attention to migration in Latin America and, more specifically, Peru. He asked Ambassador Swing for his ideas on how to handle Latin American migration issues. Ambassador Swing replied that Latin America was not getting the resources that its migration challenges merited and that, although certain funding mechanisms were available, more donors were needed. He acknowledged the utility of well-organized regional migration dialogues, but noted the need for capacity building in order to confront effectively important issues such as human trafficking and migrant smuggling in the region.

¶5. (SBU) Peru was facing the problem of being classified as a "middle income" country and was therefore perceived as less in need of international assistance, VM Gutierrez said. He asserted that a country's wealth was not the salient factor, but rather the scale of the migration challenges it faced. Gutierrez said that Peru faced a difficult array of migration

challenges and needed resources to overcome them. Ambassador Belevan noted that developed countries, especially Italy and Spain, were recruiting already employed skilled workers in Peru for positions in those countries. He asserted that those workers often were exploited and that the GOP was trying to organize assistance for that group, in particular in ensuring that their labor contracts were more fair. Belevan noted successful efforts with Peruvians serving as security guards in Iraq and as shepherds in the U.S.

IOM Office

¶16. (SBU) Ambassador Swing later visited the regional IOM office in Lima and discussed with Regional Director Pilar Norza the challenges facing her office and the region in General. Norza noted generally reduced resources for migration in the region during the last decade and that her organization was supplementing direct IOM funding by undertaking public works projects in Peru on a contract basis.

¶17. (SBU) Comment: Ambassador Swing did not formally request, and VM Gutierrez did not offer, an immediate decision on whom Peru would support in the election, but Post is optimistic that Peru eventually will cast its vote in favor of Ambassador Swing. First, the atmosphere during the MFA meeting was very positive: a scheduled 30-minute meeting lasted almost an hour, with VM Gutierrez energetically engaged in the discussion. Second, Peru generally has supported U.S. initiatives in multilateral settings, especially of U.S. candidacies. In this case, where the other candidates lack the active support (or in some cases, even the endorsement) of their governments, that trend should continue. End comment.

¶18. (U) PRM has cleared this cable.
MCKINLEY